

RM-10811

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It is recommended that this partition be denied.

Like it or not, emergency communications (emcom) has become the lifeblood of Amateur Radio. To support this inherited charter, one of which I am personally proud, it requires the most versatile operators we in the ranks can possibly train and license.

The Morse Code is a fundamental skill required for emergency communications. I have provided a detailed paper explaining this position as an attachment to my response to RM-10806. Because of the importance of Morse, and because we need the largest possible pool of Morse qualified operators to carry out our emcom charter, the tests for our licenses must assure at least a minimal skill in Morse, as it now does, plus as much skill in the associated technologies as it is possible to include. The limits of the technical examination should be as high as possible without limiting the growth of our fraternity. In emcom, Amateurs need both technical and Morse skills, as they always have had.

This partition, RM-10811, would dramatically reduce the number of new code-proficient operators flowing into our system, a move that could lead to loss of our Amateur bands. These days, the commercial interests are nipping at our heels, itching to get any or all of our frequency allocations. We must show that we can continue to earn the Government's confidence in our emcom abilities that our forbearers have generated. It has become a question of use in the public interest, whenever called upon, or lose.

I could certainly support a similar partition which would also call for combining the Technician and Tech Plus; however, I would continue to require the aspirants to demonstrate a proficiency of 5 wpm in the Morse Code.

As you will learn if you read my paper, I seldom use the Morse Code in my casual amateur contacts. I simply don't enjoy it. However, I feel that the future of Amateur Radio itself is at stake here and that abandoning Morse will eventually play directly into the hands of the commercial interests waiting in the wings for us to let down our guard.